Natures
Cruell Step-Dames:
OR,
Matchlesse Monsters of the Female Sex; *Elizabeth Barnes*, and *Anne Willis*.
Who were executed the 26. day of *April*, 1637. at Tyburne, for the unnaturall murthering of their owne Children,

Also, herein is contained their severall Confessions, and the Courts just proceedings against other notorious Malefactors, with their severall offences *this Sessions*.

Further, a Relation of the wicked Life and impenitent Death of *John Flood*, who raped his own Childe.



Printed at London for *Francis Coules*, dwelling in the Old-Baily. 1637.

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Sex, Preſented here, and there Will.

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Malefactors, with their ſeverall Offences
the ſuffer.

Further, a Relation of the wicked Life and
ignominious Death of Robert Keel, who raped
his own Childe.



Printed at London for Francis Coules, dwelling in
the Old Baily. 1639.

A Narration of the Diabolicall seduction of Elizabeth Barnes, late of Batterſey in the County of Surrey widdow, mercileſly to murder Suſan Barnes her owne naturall Child.

A Whole moneth, as ſhee confeſt in the publike hearing of divers perſons of good repute, this Savage continued with this hellish fire kindled in her breaſt, violently at the laſt breaking forth into the unnaturall deprivation of the life of the fruit of her owne wombe. The ſubtill ſerpent Satan, that thus long time had poſſeſſed her, putteth into her minde the manner how to put in execution her diabolicall execrable intention on the innocent childe, without its leaſt ſuſpition, as you may perceive by the ſequele of the Hiſtory. To intice the childe unto its ſlaughter, and to goe abroad with her, ſhe provided the 24 day of *March* laſt 1637. very early in the morning, an Apple Pye, a Herring Pye, Raiſins

ſins of the Sun, and other fruits which ſhee carried with her; accuſtomed baits, uſed by loving Parents, to quiet and ſtill their children in their unquietneſſe, but this creature otherwiſe, to deſtroy her childe by that meanes. Theſe things being thus prepared before-hand, and the child beholding them, did ſet an edge on its affections, willingly to accompany her cruell mother, in her travell towards her long home.

The innocent Lambe and ravenous Wolfe both ſpend out the day together; with joyfull expectation, the one willingly endureth the travell and heat of the day, to goe to be placed with a kinſwoman of hers, as was pretended, but alas this was but flattery to ſhed innocent blood. Towards the evening of the ſame day, theſe her alluring kind of deadly junkets, ſhe brings with her childe, into a Wood called *Wormewall Wood*, being in the Pariſh of *Fulham* in the County of *Middleſex*, ſome 4. miles diſtance from the place where ſhe dwelt; being there in ſecret, and covered with darkneſſe, ſhe faineth unto the child this excuſe, ſaying, that ſhe was very weary, and was not able to goe any further, but muſt upon neceſſity ſtay a while, there to reſt and eaſe her ſelf, the which the poore childe, as ſhee ſaid, moſt lovingly intreated her to doe, being alſo glad of ſuch repoſe.

Being ſet downe together, ſhe taketh out of her basket, the Pyes, and fruit, and ſets them before the childe, for to eate of them, which did ſo.

Thus having eaten of ſuch things formerly provided for it, being tyred with going ſo farre a journey, it being but of the age of eight yeeres; afterwards ſweetly falleth into a faſt ſleep, which was very oportune for her mothers accurſed deſigne, for that ſame night about the houres of xj. and xij. ſhee drew out of her ſheath a knife, and with that knife barbarouſly did cut the throat of the child. Soone after this bloody fact, being done by her, her eyes were opened, that ſhe beheld her miſerable condition, and that, that by her bloody hands had beene done, that could no way be again undone. She reſolved before hand, how to diſpoſe of her ſelfe after the fact committed. For ſhe carried with her the inſtrument of her owne death, as ſhe did the childs; for it a knife, ſo a halter, wherewith to end her owne life, and attempted it, but had not power to lay violent hands on her ſelfe, being mercifully thereof prevented by the all-powerfull hand of heaven: after this firſt attempt, as ſhe ſaid, ſhe was ſtrongly ſet on againe by the Devill to drowne her ſelfe, but that prevailed not againſt her, but forthwith brake out then

into a great passion, as it were a fountaine of teares, humbly and heartily imploring Heavens mercy and forgivenesse for her bloody crying-fact.

Her guilty conscience, will no way permit her to rest, or shew her any place of refuge for safety; but according unto that saying of the Psalmist, it falleth upon her. *Evill shall hunt the wicked person to overthrow them*, and so it did, to the full satisfaction of all the beholders. For whither doth this affrighted Creature, run or flee suppose yee, but even unto the gates of Justice, crying, as it were there, for Justice to be rendred according to her demerit? From the wood shee flees into *Kensington*, and there hides her selfe all in straw, in the Barne of one *Disney*: and being there found, suspition of this murther was laid unto her charge, which shee confest to his wife and servant, and afterwards shee was carryed unto Master *Pen* a Justice in that Towne, unto whom she confest the same fact.

This fact being rumored abroad, I went unto New-gate to visit this miserable delinquent, who at my first view of her matronlike aspect, induced me to enter into present discourse with her, to prevaile if I could possibly, to finde out the cause that moved her unto such unheard of cruelty: shee answered

me againe, none but the Devill alone tempted her thereunto, and with teares fast trickling downe her cheekes, desired my selfe, with the rest that stood by, to pray unto Almighty God, to take mercy on her poore sinfull soule, to save that from hell.

A second time I urged her, to discover the cause of that fact, and disburden her conscience, and somwhat then fell from her, thus saying, that she had spent all the estate shee had upon one that pretended love unto her, and being by that meanes become poore and indebted, knew not what would become of her, but instantly resolved on this desperate course, leaving such deep impression in her mind, with the continuance of time in not disclosing of it, that the temptation, and resolution waxed daily stronger, and powerfully wrought on her. Being demanded what she thought should become of her after the fact done, thus replyed, that she attempted to hang her selfe, but had not power, nor doubtlesse could not have such a hard heart, to kill the child, had it been but awake, as it was a sleep. For that time I departed from her, and freshly the third time indeavoured to discover more but could not, but constantly she adhered to her former confession, no whit varying.

Serious

Serious advertiſements unto all good Chriſtians, and cautions, by this ignorant ſinfull womans *ſuddaine downe-fall.*

IF this womans houſe had beene ſet on fire, doubtleſſe ſhe would have made ſuch an out-crie in the ſtreets, that all her neighbours muſt of neceſſity riſe, and adde unto her all help poſſible to quench the fire. Her heart was here ſet on fire by hell, muſing to perpetrate miſchiefe, her tongue is ſilent, and mouth is ſhut, when it ſhould have beene wide open, to cry aloud unto God, for grace and mercy, and to crave the helpe of the effectuall prayers of Gods holy Miniſters, and Congregations of his Saints here on earth, to deliver her out of the ſnare and bondage of Satan, whom ſhe voluntarily obeyed. If a limbe had beene broken, ſhee would not reſt ſatisfied till a Chyrurgion had beene preſent for to cure her.

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If ſhee had falne ſuddainly deſperate ſicke for feare of death, haſtily they poſt and runne to ſeeke for a Phyſitian; but her ſoule is ſicke, and drawes nigh downward into Hell, whatcare or cure of that, where was God or his Miniſters thought of all this while, bleſſed Saint *Paul* ſo ſoone as the Viper ſeized on his hand, ſhooke it off immediately into the fire: a whole moneth this venemous Viper, *Murder*, lodgeth in her heart; God, prayer unto him, and hearing of his Word all this while was layd aſide. Cunning deluding Satan ſitteth likewiſe on her tongue, as he tooke ſeizure on her heart, that he tyeth faſt, not able to pray, which might have prevailed againſt him. Devoute Prayer is his ſcourge, and faithleſſe faint-hearted people onely give place unto him, and ſinke downe at his feet.

The Devill is but a weake faint-hearted Coward, *Reſiſt him*, ſaith the bleſſed Apoſtle, *and hee will flye from you.* This kinde of evill ſpirit, ſaith our Saviour Chriſt, cannot be caſt out, but by faſting and prayer. Our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt in the diſconſolate time of his moſt bitter paſſion on the Croſſe for our

ſakes, to encounter Satan, to comfort himſelfe in that great Agony he was in, and to get the Conqueſt of that grand captaine of all miſchiefe, prayer unto his heavenly Father in the Garden, inculcates frequently this duty unto his diſtreſſed followers, *Watch and pray*, and joynes the neceſſity of it, *leaſt yee fall into Temptation*. Is a weake childe able to ſtand in the way of a Lyon ſtirred up unto fury and rage, no whit poſſible: much leſſe is a ſinnefull weake man able to grapple with the powerfull ſtrength of ſinne and Satan; and therefore pray, that power may be given unto you from above, to reſiſt, the leaſt of whoſe temptations, ye are no wayes able to reſiſt of your ſelves. 1 Pet. 5.8. *Bee ſober, and watch for your adverſary the Devill, as a roaring Lion walketh about, ſeeking whom he may devoure. Diabolus non dormit*, the Divell is not idle, neither ſleepes nor ſlumbers, but watcheth to take his advantage, ſeeketh which way unawares to ruſh in ſuddenly upon poore ſoules. By lamentable late experience, Satan hath foyled many, witneſſe thoſe weekely bills of caſualties for *London* and *Middleſex*. The Devill although hee is

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impudent and potent, the holy Apoſtle in the ninth verſe, ſhewes a meanes there, to abate his pride who reſiſt in the faith, a faithfull Chriſtian makes him to fly, feare, and quake. In the firſt of *Samuel* 17. chap. 40. verſ. There is mention made, that *David* choſe him five ſmooth ſtones out of a brooke, with one of them hee ſlew *Goliah*.

Medici utuntur diverſis medicamentis ad diuerſos morbos at Chriſtianis contra omnia mala unicum remedium eſt præcationis medicina Granatenſis.

Learned Phyſitians apply various medicines unto the nature of the diſeaſe, but unto Chriſtians onely, one Soveraigne medicine, as an Antidote is preeſcribed, againſt all manner of malignous diſeaſes, the onely remedy is medicine of Prayer, the healthy man prayer preſerveth alive, the ſicke man Prayer reſtoreth health: In time of warre prayer is the victorious Conquerour; In the time of peace prayer is the infallible Defender of King and people, in health and proſperity: Saint *Iames* 5 chapter 15. verſe. *Sinnes are promiſed to be forgiven, and the prayer of a righteous*

teous man availeth much if it bee feruent: Precibus, non paſsibus itur ad Deum, ergo aſcendat oratio, ut deſcendat gratia: as the foot by paces carry the body, ſo the ſoule is carried up unto Heaven by Prayer; therefore let thy prayer aſcend up unto thy God daily, that hee may ſend downe, the dew of his holy Spirit into thy ſoule. *Deijcitur Satan cum tu aſcenderis, aſcendis duobus modis, meditatione et oratione, meditatio quod decet docet, oratio quod deeſt obtinet, Gregory.* Satan is caſt under thy foot when thou raiſeſt up thy ſoule toward Heaven by Prayer. Two manner of wayes there are that man may climbe up unto the toppe of Heavens holy hill, namely meditation and prayer; meditation is prayers hand-mayd, Meditation inſtructeth, what becommeth the ſoule to doe, prayer ſupplies what is wanting unto the ſoule.

Good King *Dauid* in the 5. Pſalm. ver. 3. made a promiſe unto Almighty God, and what was it. *My voyce ſhalt thou heare betimes, Oh Lord, early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will looke up: A domino hoc iubemur orare, ut ab eo*

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qui ſecretorum cognitor eſt, recipiamus orationis occultæ mercedem : Chryſoſtom. in Math. Homil. 8.

We are of the Lord Jeſus commanded this chiefely (to pray) that of him unto whom the ſecrets of all hearts are manifeſt, wee may receive openly a heavenly Reward of our Prayers offered in ſecreets, to conclude this, as the Pſalmiſt adviſed, *Powre out your prayers before him, without which no minuite of the day can be happy unto us.* I will commend unto your daily meditations and practiſe that repleate zealous Collect preſcribed to be read in the ſecond Sunday in Lent, and the Lord give a daily bleſſing to thoſe that doe imbrace the inſtruction.

The laſt Caution is the neglect of Gods Miniſter in not repairing unto him.

SInne is like a ſpot in a garment, at the firſt it may be eaſily expunged, but by continuance, it gathereth more and more ſoile uuto it, making it ſo difficult that it freteth the garment into peeces, before it can be cleane. Ignorant people behold their ſins,

through the ſpectactles of their owne fantaſies, they extend or extenuate their ſinnes as they pleaſe, thereby deceiving themſelves, ſome make ſinnes leſſer, and and others greater than they are, and it cannot otherwiſe poſſible be; becauſe, they are not able to judge of the difference being ignorant and unlettered, than a blinde man can diſtinguiſh colours.

A ſtumbling blocke into this womens way the Divell caſts, not to goe unto her Miniſter unto whom the Almighty GOD had given the paſtorall Cure of her ſoule, to reveale her minde unto him, for feare of revealing it againe, what doth GOD intruſt us with your deare ſoules? and will not you truſt us with your filthy ſinnes? to diſcover them, to disburden your heavy laded conſciences, will you not make nice to ſhew a noyſome foule ulcerated body, and ſhew the place where it paineth you moſt to the chyrurgion, to have thereby eaſe, and bee too too curious in the matters of your ſoule; your abominable ſinnes let them alone?

alone untouched, or not confeſſed at all, which by confeſſion may bee leſſened, and people made wary to walke more circumſpectly, and the hainouſneſſe of ſinne being ſet before mens eyes, may deterre them from committing of them againe. Beloved, a weake ſlight and ſubtilty in the Devill, that with-holds the poore penſive ſinner, from his ghoſtly comforter (Confeſſion) what then? oh no, by no menaes, I will not doe it, hee will reveile mee, will you not bluſh for ſhame, nor hold it no blemiſh, to harbour wicked thoughts in your hearts, which GOD knoweth, and ſeeth, and in the open day of the world exorbitantly commit them, and is this a greater offence to confeſſe them, and to turne from them, judge yee? Our ayme of the Church of England is not ſuch, as that of Rome, to creepe into mens ſecrets hearts, to hold them in awe, but diſcover their ſinnes, to ſave that way their ſoules, and as for diſcloſing of ſuch kinde of perſons, let mee adviſe them, not in the leaſt manner to doubt our ſecrecy, we have learned bet-

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ter, and desire our Auditors to be otherwise perswaded of us. Whether is God or men wiser? the holy Spirit adviseth unto this duty of Confession, by that meanes yee lessen sinne in you, and cast out the Devill. Christ cured none but those that shewed their disease, and beleeved his power, by confession of sinne the way for the Lord Iesus is prepared, and by the prayer of the faithfull Minister unto God for the poore penitent sinner, his sinnes are forgiven him, Satan cast out, and his soule better armed against his future strong temptations. King *Dauid* resolved saying: Palme 38. verse 18. *I will confesse my wickednesse, and bee sorry for my sinne.* *Magnus accessus ad Deum, cognitio est infirmitatis suæ*, the step that we set forwards Hsaven, after we have falne into sinne, is the unfaigned confessing of our downfall by sinne. *S. Luke* 15. chap. with the prodigall: *I will goe to my father, and say unto him, Father, I haue sinned against Heauen and thee.* Psal. 15. *Against thee onely have I sinned, and done euill in thy sight*, at last he prayeth, *O cleanse thou me from my secret faults, there is none whole in my body or soule by reason of sin.*

32. *Pſalm.* 5, 6 *verſ. I will knowledge my ſinne unto thee, and mine unrighteouſneſſe have I not hid. I ſaid, I will confeſſe my ſinnes unto the Lord, and ſo thou forgaveſt the wickedneſſe of my ſinne.* Theſe were the enſuing comforts and favours of God to the ſinner; remiſſion of ſins for cõfeſſing of them. Read the 5th. Chap. of *Iames, ver. 6. Acknowledge your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.* Our bleſſed Saviour, whẽ he ſent his Diſciples into the world, as he gave them a Commiſſion for to preach, ſo likewiſe power over uncleane ſpirits, to caſt them out. In a word, he gave them power of ſinnes in the totall lumpe: *Whoſoevers ſinnes ye retaine* (ſaith he) *they are retained, and whoſoevers ſins ye remit, they are remitted.* What greater comfort could Chriſt pronounce, then ſay, *Son, thy ſinnes be forgiven?* and how did the Iewes diſdaine at thoſe words, ſaying, *Who can forgive ſins, but God only?* Chriſt readily replieth, and giveth them a token of the truth thereof, by the peraliptick man to riſe up and walke before them, *That ye may know the Son of man hath power to forgive ſins here on earth, I ſay unto thee, Ariſe, take up thy bed, and walk. Primus ad indulgentiam gradus eſt agnoſcere delictum.* The chiefeſt way to obtaine mercy at Gods hands for ſinns paſt, is to acknowledge the offences done. *Dum agnoſcit reus, ignoſcit Deus.* and the ſinner is not readier to confeſſe his wickedneſſe, but God is as ready againe for to forgive them. *Novit Deus omnia, vocem tamen tuam expectet, ſi taces Secretarius es Diaboli,* ſaith S. *Ambr.* God knoweth all things,

yet the voyce, and confeſſion of penitent ſinners, he regardeth, and expecteth; If a ſinner be at any time ſilent, he is but the Devils Secretary.

The Confeſsion of *Elizabeth Barnes*, the 26. of *Aprill*, 1637, *at the place of Execution.*

DVring the time that ſhee was in priſon, ſhee concealed her Adultery, that ſhe was begot with Child, by him on whom ſhe had waſted her eſtate, and deluded with hopes of Marriage. His name, as ſhee ſaid, was *Richard Evans*, a Taylor dwelling in *Batterſey* in the Countie of *Surrey*: upon whoſe conſcience lieth very heavie, his falſe dealing with the poore woman. I wiſh that hee may heartily aske God and the world forgivenes for his impieties in publicke. Through whoſe deceits and flatteries, this poore creatures ruine was occaſioned. And ſo much for *Elizabeth Barnes*.

A Relation of Anne Willis, *the manner of of the murdering of her owne Child, confeſſed by her at the place of Execution.*

VPon an Inquiſition of one of the Coroners Inqueſt, for the County of *Middleſex*, upon the view of the body of her Baſterd-child, taken out

out of a vault in *Rosemary* Lane, by Tower Hill, by her therein throwne, being by the Iury made, returne unto the Coroner of Murder, Warrants were immediately sent out unto all parts for the apprehending of the said *Ann Willis*, who upon the seventh day of *March*, 1637, was taken, and brought before Sir *Thomas Iaye*, unto whom she confessed the fact: That the Child was borne alive: there was two upon oath justified it, that shee said it was alive. Oh cruell Monsters of that tender Sex. *Can a woman forget the child of her wombe? Isa. 9.* Heavens infinite compassion is compared unto the Mother and Infant, the neere tye between them, and the intire care of mothers over their children! When I lift up mine eyes towards the Heavens, & againe cast them downe to the earth; Birds and Beasts, me thinks, do rise up in judgement against these unnaturall cruell Beastes in womens shapes. The Swallow flieth high, and in the towring Trees, Churches, and Houses build their Nestes, to preserve their yong ones [illegible]nger; The Sparrow watcheth alone on the House top, as carefull what it had hatched and brought foorth. Beasts, such as Lyons, Woolves, Tigers and Foxes, have secret caves and woods where they hide there young, to preserve & foster them alive: But these bloody dogs degenerate from them. O let therefore the memoriall of them perish.

A Relation of Iohn Flood, *late of* S. Giles in the Field, *for the committing of a Rape on the body of his owne naturall child, being under the age of ten yeares.*

THis man was moſt notorious, and generally reported to be of a moſt diſſolute converſation. The fact which was layd unto his charge, fully prooved by the Teſtimony of divers grave and ſober Matrons, which ſearched the Body of the Child, and ſaid, ſhee had been abuſed by a man without all queſtion. The Honourable Judges, before whom this haynous fact was tryed, inquired to finde out the Actor of ſo horrid a deed. The Child on whom it was done, produced, nor accuſed any other perſon but *Flood* her owne Father, and related very confidently the manner of their carnall knowledge of each other, to the full ſatisfaction of all that heard her, that none but he could be the man. Being demanded the reaſon why ſhee did not immediately reveale that her Father had to doe with her, ſhee anſwered, That ſhe durſt not ſpeake of it againe unto any body, becauſe her father ſaid, If ſhee ſhould at any time tell what hee did unto her, the Devill would preſently teare her in pieces. This the child averred unto the Court before his face, at the time of his Triall.

What Flood *ſayd at the place of Execution.*

As hee impudently denied the Fact at the time of his Triall, hee perſevered to the inſtant of his death,

death, of the deniall of the fact, with many feare-full imprecations of judgements, and renunciation of Gods mercies if he were any wayes guilty: In great passionate hot termes hee brake forth against his wife, on this wise saying, That three yeeres she was conspiring to worke his downfall, wch now by her was effected. And thus this barren Tree at the Tree of execution stood and fell.

The Confession of Ioane Burs, *taken before Sir* Iames Cambell, *Knight, the* 8. *day of Aprill,* 1637.

SHee said that the Saturday before *Christmas* last, her Master having given her sharpe correction, for the stealing away of a Runlet of Wine, and expending it out in the company of Lewd creatures lazing about the City; in revenge unto her Master and Mistris, she went and bought *Mercury*, and put it into a Posset, and gave it unto them both for to drink, which did indanger their lives; but blessed be God, are both yet alive: And for that exorbitant Fact, was by the Court fined, and remaines in the Goale to this present. Being demanded why shee did so uuto her Master and Mistris, Shee stood mute: but it was justified unto her face at her Triall, that these words should proceed out of her owne mouth, That if her Mistris were dead, she might afterwards have better Cloathes; And to her Master she did it, because

he did beat her ſo cruelly. But obſerve in this ſilly Girle a paſſage worth note: Who perceiving the *Mercury* to worke violently on her Miſtris, brought ſome thereof in a Paper, and ſhewed it unto her Miſtris, ſaying, that doubtleſs her Maſter had put ſomething into the Poſſet, that made her ſo ſicke; craftily intending by this, to caſt off all ſuſpicion from her ſelf; but that faſtned it upon her, as juſt cauſe there was. And ſo much for that.

The Confeſſion of Anne Holden, *before Sir* Iames Cambell, *the* 16. *day of March*, 1637.

THe ſaid *Anne Holden* confeſſed, as it was in the Court read, That laſt Night was ſeven weekes, ſhe being lodged in the houſe of *Iohn Atkins* at Colebrooke, was delivered of a Child, no body being with her; which ſaid Child ſhee threw into a Ditch, on the Back-ſide of the ſaid Houſe, becauſe it ſhould not be known nor ſeene. But ſhe was ſpared her Triall, becauſe ſhe is to be removed unto *Buckingham*, there to be tryed upon another Murther.

Laſtly, there is one Notorious Bawd *Rebecca Smith*, who dwelt at the Seven-ſtars in *White-croſs-ſtreet*, convicted for a Bawd; who according unto her deſerts, is to be Carted about the City, and thence ought to be baniſht.

FINIS.